



## **COMMENTS ON THE 2014 FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES**

**GAME OFFICIALS AUTHORITY (1-1-7):** Due to teams being on the field earlier than 30 minutes prior to the game, state associations can require game officials to be on the field for pre-game responsibilities more than 30 minutes prior to game time. This change extends the game officials authority in those states.

**TARGETING DEFINITION AND FOUL ADDED (2-20-2 NEW; 9-4-3m NEW):** Continuing with the focus on risk minimization, the committee determined that taking aim at an opponent with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow or shoulder, to initiate contact above the shoulders with an intent that goes beyond making a legal tackle, a legal block or playing the ball is prohibited. Furthermore, the committee feels it is important to separate and draw specific attention to this illegal act.

**ILLEGAL KICK CLARIFIED (2-24-9):** The committee clarified the intent of an illegal kick. When an illegal kick occurs, the loose ball retains the same status that it had prior to the illegal kick.

**DEFINITION OF DEFENSELESS PLAYER ADDED (2-32-16 NEW; 9-4-3i(3)):** The committee added the definition of a defenseless player in an attempt to continue concentrating on risk minimization. A defenseless player is a player who, because of his physical position and focus of concentration, is especially vulnerable to injury.

**END-OF-PERIOD PROCEDURE CHANGED (3-3-3, 4):** This rule changes the procedure of determining when to extend a period with an untimed down. In order to extend a period with an untimed down, time must expire during the down.

**PROVISIONS TO FREE-KICK FORMATIONS ADDED (6-1-3b, c NEW):** Two new provisions were added to adjust the free kick. One provision balances the kicking team's formation and the other limits the maximum distance of the run-up for the kicking team.

**CLARIFICATION OF CREATING A NEW FORCE (8-5-1b NEW):** This rule change clarifies that a new force is not created when a player is blocked into the ball.

**ROUGHING-THE-PASSER FOULS REVISED (9-4-4):** Roughing-the-passer fouls now include all illegal personal contact fouls listed in Rule 9-4-3. These fouls against the passer now result in an automatic first down in addition to a 15-yard penalty.